

1231812

Meadows Care Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned by a private company. It is one of four operated under a contract with a large local authority. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children who may have experienced trauma and multiple moves.

A new manager is in the process of registering with Ofsted.

At the last full inspection, on 10 March 2020, the overall judgement was good, with a requires improvement to be good for how well children are helped and protected.

Inspection date: 28 January 2021

This monitoring visit

This visit took place in response to concerns following safeguarding notifications sent to Ofsted, which related to a child repeatedly going missing from the home.

Staff provide a high quality of care and endeavour to provide sensitive and responsive care which children value and benefit from. As a result, children feel safe and trust the staff that care for them. Staff support children to get the most out of spending time with their family and this leads to improving relationships between children and people who are important to them.

Regular and reflective team meetings, supervision, training and support from the clinical psychologist ensure that staff are well equipped to provide care which is informed by a clear therapeutic approach. Children's needs are assessed well, and they receive the support that they need.

The manager is child focused and proactively sets clear standards of care. When there are gaps in children's needs being met or risks present for children, she advocates and escalates her concerns with key professionals to ensure that

children's needs are recognised and met, even in the face of professional resistance. Professionals and parents of children are extremely positive about the quality of care and the warm welcome they receive from staff.

The manager has ensured that Ofsted is notified about serious incidents in the home. This helps the regulator to understand what is happening at the home and how managers respond when serious incidents happen.

Individual risk assessments are child focused and comprehensive in relation to risks children face when they go missing from the home. These documents provide sufficient information and guidance for staff. As a result, staff are clear about when they should attempt to make telephone contact, the length of time they should search for children and what to do when children are missing overnight, as well as a sensitive and warm approach to their well-being and safety when they return home.

When children go missing, staff take proactive action to contact, find and return them safely home. Staff contact one child on their mobile phone every 15 minutes. While this may be helpful in some circumstances, it may also have the unintended consequence of reducing the phone's battery charge and so the child may be unable to contact staff. The manager is giving this some thought and will review this with the child and relevant professionals and change the arrangement if deemed necessary. Return home interviews are undertaken by an independent person and this gives children who go missing from the home the opportunity to talk to someone independent about why they went missing and what happened while they were away.

The manager ensures that safeguarding referrals are made when necessary to achieve a stronger response from professionals. The manager has contributed to and advocated strongly for children in multi-agency meetings and strategy discussions, ensuring that information is shared and protective action taken by the police and local authority to reduce the risk of harm to the child.

Staff supervision is regular and new staff are given extra help to ensure that they are fully supported and familiar with policies and procedures, and issues which can arise when caring for vulnerable children. The clinical psychologist who is linked to the home adds value for the staff team and children, providing consultation to staff, assessment and direct work with children, enabling a shared therapeutic approach.

A comprehensive training programme is in place. The vast majority of staff are up to date with core safeguarding training, including in missing from home and child exploitation. Nearly all care staff are qualified to at least level 3 diploma level. One member of care staff is in the process of completing the qualification within the required timescale and two new members of staff, still completing their probationary period, are yet to start.

Safe and robust recruitment processes and practices are in place and adhered to when recruiting new staff. Written references are verified verbally with referees. All necessary checks are undertaken to confirm that the applicant poses no risk to children.

There have been no incidents involving physical intervention by staff with children since the last inspection in March 2020. There is a comprehensive physical restraint policy. It includes the need for management review of incidents and examination of emerging trends and issues to enable staff to reflect, learn and inform future practice. Despite caring for children whose behaviour has presented challenges, staff have felt confident to manage these challenges well. Skilled staff recognise escalations in children's behaviour, understand the reasons and triggers for the behaviour and effectively defuse situations which might otherwise have resulted in a physical intervention. There is evidence of reflection and learning through sessions with the clinical psychologist, team meetings and supervision. This helps staff and children to understand what has happened and reduces the chance of the same thing happening again.

Since the last inspection, staff and managers have worked effectively to address the areas for improvement identified at the last full inspection. No requirements or recommendations are raised following this inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/03/2020	Full	Good
08/11/2018	Full	Good
23/10/2017	Full	Good
21/03/2017	Full	Good

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1231812

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Meadows Care Ltd

Registered provider address: Meadows Care Ltd, Egerton House, Wardle Road, Wardle, Rochdale OL12 9EN

Responsible individual: Lara Elsegood

Registered manager: Amy Mackey

Inspector

Alison Smale, Her Majesty's Inspector

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